



The Spirit

Spring/
Summer
2013

of the United States Adaptive Recreation Center

Winter? What winter?

Mother Nature sure gave us a tease this year. With all the talk about a huge winter, especially after our really wet summer, one would imagine that the snow would dump.



Volunteers Dan and Greg take a break from showing Frances a good time in her bi-ski.

However, that was not the case. Snow was not dumping, let alone falling, especially when December arrived. Chair 9 couldn't even open due to some diseased trees being cut down, so Bear Mountain could only run its oldest chair for a few weeks for all the die-hards wanting to hit the slopes.

While the USARC crossed its collective fingers that the beginner chair would open in time for lessons and volunteer training, the former had to be delayed and the latter was held sans equipment, sitting around picnic tables under sunny skies.

(see Winterless Winter, pg. 5)

Hydrophilic Participants and Volunteers Wanted!

Spring is here and summer is not too far behind! Hooray for sunshine and warm water! We here at the USARC are always excited about summer, when Tom gets to wear his beloved flip flops, Sara's "office" switches from a ski slope to a lakeside dock, and Shelly gets to spread her schedule between the sunny USARC deck and the water sports venue.

As you read this, the USARC summer program is already getting underway. Boats are slowly but surely coming out of their winter hibernations down the



Together, Stevie and Chelsea demonstrate just how stable, versatile and fun a SUP can be.

hill, paddle boards and water ski equipment goes through their annual inspection and maintenance, kayaks are loaded onto the trailer, and YOU sign up to participate or volunteer! (see Water Lovers, pg. 2)



A simple wedge can be a wonderfully liberating.

Your Point of View

This winter, the USARC emailed its participants asking them to share something memorable about their experiences on the slopes. There were numerous wonderful responses, out of which the following response about Cassidy Fry was selected. In return, Cassidy wins a day session with the USARC this coming summer!

(see Cassidy, pg. 7)

A Note from the Executive Director

We all probably remember, whether it was read to us, or read by us to another, the book *The Little Engine That Could*. Okay, spoiler warning! The plot has this little train trying to improve the lives of kids by delivering toys and bibelots to them over a mountain, yet it proves too difficult and she has to stop. She asks numerous other bigger engines to help, but for a variety of reasons (pride, age, selfishness) they choose not to assist. Finally, a little blue engine puffs along and agrees to help out, and with the mantra "I think I can, I think I can, I think I can," she makes it up over the mountain and completes the delivery.



Tom Peirce
USARC Exec. Dir.



United States Adaptive Recreation Center

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WWW.USARC.ORG

Recently, while sitting in our primaveral board meeting with USARC's accomplished trustees, I described this past ski season as "the little winter that could." Not only didn't we get the epic El Nino dumps that some people had forecasted, we didn't even get half of our average annual snowfall! Rather, a foot of snow would fall, followed by two weeks of sunshine, then two feet of snow would fall, followed by a week and a half of sunshine, then another foot and a half would fall, followed by three weeks of sunshine, etc. Just like that little engine, Mother Nature didn't disappoint, managing to deliver her bounty at just the right intervals to make sure that all the little girls and boys had exactly what they needed to be happy and joyful. Oh yes, and the big girls and boys too!

So sure, while it never materialized into the "Mother of all Winters" and my new Volk powder skis still sit un-mounted in the rack, the storms rolled through with sufficient regularity to satisfy almost everybody and deliver countless smiles. I think I can, I think I can, I think I can...

To be a little more panoptic here, the more I thought about the whole "Little Engine" analogy, I saw it doesn't just relate to the work of Mother Nature, but also to that of our participants, volunteers and supporters.

Our **participants** each work very hard to face and overcome any challenges secondary to their disability, exploring and exercising the physical, intellectual and social sides of their nature. They think they can! Our **volunteers** were not like the above noted "bigger engines," with their excuses and rationales for not helping, but instead stepped it up and laid it on the line day after day, all winter long. They think they can! Our **supporters** made the Ski-A-Thon the best in years, and the philanthropy of our extended family showed through many hundreds of generous donations, all of which enabled the USARC to keep its fees unchanged for a seventh straight year! They think they can!

Thank you all for helping the USARC be The Little Engine That Could.

With Sympathy

The USARC wants to express its condolences and support to our following extended family members who lost loved ones in the past year.

Volunteers and Peak to Peak Pedal participants Ken and Susie Klein for the loss of their son Kyler.

Former volunteer of the year George Watson-Jones for the loss of his wife and program participant Marty.

Volunteer Kam Lawrence and her sons Hayden and Ben for the loss of husband and father John.

The Cline/Powell families for the loss of Paul Cline, one of the USARC's dedicated volunteers in its formative years.

Water Lovers (cont.)

Beginning at 9:00 AM on May 14, 2013, reservations will be accepted for single-day and overnight sessions. The day sessions combine water-skiing, Jet skiing, paddle boarding and



Gus gives the thumbs-up, meaning "Faster!" Wow, what a surprise.

kayaking, while the overnights sessions add sailing and fishing to the mix. The latter sessions are based around the accessible Serrano campground on Big Bear Lake's north shore, enabling "citified" folks to enjoy the alpine environment by firelight, moonlight and starlight.

Whatever you like, the USARC summer program has something for you. Once registered, you can download and complete an [information form](#) on the forms page at www.usarc.org.

All of this happens thanks to the USARC's renowned cadre of volunteers. To join this incredible crew, a required one-day training session is offered on June 22. In addition to training, volunteers are asked to commit to 6 days, including four day sessions and one overnight session between the months of July and August. Come on out and see what it takes to get a participant water skiing, trim a sail, or help someone figure out the SUP. No matter what your skill, you will have a blast being a part of this unique program. Please complete the [volunteer application](#) on the USARC website, and thank you.



Glassy blue water and a quiver of water toys await. The only thing missing is you!

Online Survey Saves You \$\$

The USARC provides services for about a tenth of the price that somebody without a disability would incur. This is facilitated not just by events like the Ski-A-Thon and Peak to Peak Pedal, but also by our successful grant writing program, an integral part of which is your opinions and testimonials. Please complete a brief survey at www.surveymonkey.com/s/USARC_Participant_Evaluation and help us help you. Thank you for your important feedback!

Shelly's FUNraisers keep the crown, again!

Dynasties. The Steelers in the 70's, the San Francisco Forty Niners in the 80's, the Cowboys (cough cough) in the 90's, and the Patriots in the 00's. Add to that list the Jamesons in the 10's.

Michelle Jameson, with a little help from parents Doug and Sandy, once again swept top fundraiser honors at the annual Ski-A-Thon, and in so doing ensuring her name was engraved on the perpetual plaque for the sixth time in seven years.



Raising some \$5,500 in support of the USARC, the efforts of Shelly's FUNraisers capped a glorious day of fun and festivity, full of sunshine, good food, great music and wonderful prizes, courtesy of the Ski-A-Thon sponsors (whose logos can be seen on the USARC website.) Thanks also goes to Doug Jameson for donating some very nice raffle items!

Close on Michelle's heels came Team Moosetache, raising \$3,737, followed by Team Bucé with \$1,810. Even though it was split between many teams, special mention goes to the fundraising efforts of Team Briana with \$3,300 raised!



If you didn't make it this year, we look forward to seeing if you can de-throne the Ski-A-Thon's Queen Shelly next year!

Doug, Sandy and Michelle (aka Shelly's FUNraisers) keep the dynasty going for another year!

Volunteer (of the year)

Profile - Steve Betance

The Spirit (TS): So, Steve, how does it feel to be Volunteer of the Year?

Steve Betance (SB): A huge honor! I was so surprised to be awarded Volunteer of the Year, I was practically speechless. I definitely plan to come back next year and maybe even get my PSIA adaptive instructor certification.

TS: We know we'll see you this summer, what about the Peak to Peak Pedal in October?

SB: I will definitely be out there for the summer and I would love to Pedal in the Peak to Peak. If my shoulder heals quickly (I just had surgery), then hopefully I will get on a bike. My girlfriend even said she would help me raise money. Yay!

TS: If you could get rid of a fear, what would it be?

SB: Fear is only inside the mind, so I choose confidence and fate.



Don't be fooled by the skull and crossbones, Steve's smile and enthusiasm are his true trademarks.

TS: What was your favorite lesson?

SB: My favorite lesson with USARC would be a young girl who was not able to read. She was such a delight to talk to, such a genius! I just imagined what her potential was if she was given the ability to read. She would definitely have the flood gates of knowledge open.

TS: If you could go back in time where and why?

SB: I would go back to Bromley, England in the year 1895. Why? To show Herbert G. Wells that the time machine he envisioned had become a reality. Then I would zip off to the 1920's to help Mr. Drew with his R&D for duct tape.

TS: Okay, so what is the most creative way you have used Duct tape?

SB: Personally, I have used duct tape in many ways. To fix the time machine that took me back to 1895, decorate my skis, and even make wallets. For our students, sometimes its just a necessity to hold on gloves or support a participant in the Bi-Ski.

TS: What do you tell people that ask about USARC?

SB: First I give them the contact information, or if I meet them on the hill, I send them to the program office to pick up a newsletter or talk to the girls. I always tell them how rewarding it is for me personally.

The USARC salutes and thanks the following volunteers who, through fulfilling their time commitment, ensured the 2012-13 winter was a safe, fun and learning-filled experience for each and every program participant.

Scott Adler	Michael Horner	Tom Pollard***
Britt Aguilar	Leah Hughes	David Price
JOHN ALDERETE	Trevor Irace	JOHN PRICE
Harold Allen**	Tamisha Jackson*	Paul Priest
Robert Allen***	Murray Jacobson	Gil Rangel**
Ron Andrews	Monica Jan	<u>Gioia Rhodes</u>
Debbi Armenta*	DIANE JORDAN	Tony Rogers
Valerie Baggett	Bruce Kane	Daniel Romney*
Steve Barker*	Allen Klicka*	Steve Rose
Greg Benson	Bob Knight**	Mary Kay Sachs**
<u>Steven Betance*</u>	Kay Kobayashi	Elisha Samra
Richard Beynon*	Matthew Kolodziejczyk	Melissa Schmitt**
Marsha Burns*	Bobiane Kupfer*	Don Schroeder
Jeffrey Buys	Benson Lam***	Matthew Schwier
Marilyn Capel	Soo Jeong Lee*	Bill Shanhart
CLAUDE CHIRICO	Steve LeMon	Joseph Shay*
Pius Choi	Debbie Leong	Ray Shelden***
Claude Ciocan	<u>Fred Liebel*</u>	Holly Shelton
Jack Cooperman	Kim Light	Neil Slate*
Gilbert Cortez***	Ray Locascio***	SUSAN SLESINGER
John Davidson	Jenn Long*	Carol Sorensen*
Peter de Viso***	Greg Matson***	Roger Sorensen*
Vicki Dean*	Kevin McCalley	<u>Charles Stapleton</u>
<u>Dianna DiGiandomerico</u>	Janet McCord	Steven Stapleton
Katherine Eisenbrand	MELISSA MCFEDRIES	Jamey Starcher**
Bronco Farwell*	Kim McRae**	Karyn Strong
Matt Fukushima***	Rose McShane*	Josef Szigeti*
Tony Garza	Kim Meares*	Terry Teale***
Richard Gonzalez	John Melville***	Andy Templeton***
Christy Grebel	Sue Mendoza*	Teddy Tran
Donna Halpin**	Jeff Mills*	Joyce Tran
Frank Hamilton**	Richard Mills*	<u>Paul Van Wig</u>
Michael Hansen	Paulette Moore	Jay Vickers**
Dori Harris	Karen Mora***	Tracy Walton
Mark Harris*	Rene Mora	Jeff Warhol**
Robert Harris	Greg Musser	Daniel Warner
Courtney Hayes	Ron Newport***	George Watson-Jones*
Frank Hayes*	Brent Norcutt	Sue Wellman*
Sarah Heacox*	Sandy Pappas*	Donald Whitbeck**
Scott Hepner*	Brent Pattison	Wendy Winters**
Rebecca Hinton	Matt Pawley**	BILL YAEGER
Mark Hopkins	Harry Pearce**	Maryana Yurchyshyna
Daniel Horner		

Italics = 25 years

CAPS = 20+ years

*** = 15+ years

** = 10+ years

* = 5+ years

Underline = 10+days

Bold = PSIA Certified

Winterless Winter (cont.)



Volunteer Paulette keeps a watchful eye on Brianna who seems to be having just way too much fun!

One might think a lack of powder would deter the skiing enthusiasts that characterize the USARC volunteer corps. Au contraire, the volunteers showed their adaptability and teamwork as they refreshed their minds “dry-land style.”

Finally, just in time for Christmas, cold temperatures arrived and Bear Mountain cranked up its snowmaking system, on top of which a real honest-to-goodness snowstorm arrived, and the mountain and the USARC were open for business.

January brought the beginning of group lessons and the kind of cold, dry weather for which the snowmaking crew lives, and they wasted no time blowing an astonishing amount of snow. Even with temperatures dropping to -7° one pre-dawn, leaving many households with burst or frozen pipes, participants and volunteers just threw on an extra layer and proceeded to enthusiastically slice and dice the squeaky, newly groomed corduroy.



Ray's years of volunteering show when he is smiling just as broadly as his bi-skiing student, John.

Success stories abounded this winter, be they about participants who undertook a new slope or moved closer toward independence, to the reaction of parents and loved ones moved to tears by those particular accomplishments, to first-year volunteers who crossed from intimidation to confidence with their teaching abilities, or who undertook their certification exams as adaptive instructors.

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Newly PSIA Adaptive-Certified volunteer Leah confidently calls out turning directions to her student Bryana.

The USARC is just a thing, but oh what a thing it is, to witness so much positive energy by so many people every day of its operation! So while it may not have been much of a season in terms of snow, it was so very deep in many other ways. Perhaps next winter will reward the powder hounds, but for now the USARC is happy to bid this winterless winter a fond fare-thee-well!



Congratulations to the following USARC instructors who passed their certification exam as Level 1 PSIA Adaptive Instructors. Well done!

Scott Adler
Jeff Buys
Dianna DiGiandomenico
Scott Hepner
Leah Hughes
Monica Jan
Rick “Spyder” Martin
Brent “Poncho” Norcutt



Laurie ready to “giddy-up” in her bi-ski.

Participant Profile: Laurie Eberhardt

The Spirit (TS): Tell us about your involvement with the USARC?

Laurie Eberhardt (LE): I have been skiing with USARC for three years now. I started the first two years only sitting in the bi-ski while being led by my instructors, but this year I have taken to trying the outriggers. It has been hard work, but fun and rewarding. I enjoy being able to control myself and look forward to being able to go faster. I enjoy going fast, doing reverses, and going through the half pipe. I may not look like it, but I am a bit of a daredevil and love it when my coaches take me on a fast run.

TS: How does skiing make you feel?

LE: It makes me feel able and equal to others. It is also something I can enjoy with family and friends, as my mom and brother ski. We try to make it a day for everyone to go together and do the same thing.

TS: If you had a time machine, where would you go and why?

LE: I would go back and talk with FDR. He is one of my favorite people and an inspiration to me. He did not allow his disability to stop him and he became president and led our nation through difficult times. It is too bad that during his time he was not allowed to be seen with his disability as it would have been a sign of weakness. He was a great person and a good person to have as a role model or inspiration.

TS: You wrote an article about adaptive skiing. Can you tell us something interesting that you learned?

LE: I learned it has been around a lot longer than I thought. It has been around since World War II. I saw adaptive skiing on TV during the last Winter Paralympics and thought it was cool to see the different levels and abilities. I became interested in it and when asked to do a research paper on any topic, I thought it was a perfect choice.

TS: What other hobbies do you have?

LE: I have been riding horses for 14 years now, since I was 5. I ride for therapy every week, but also compete in events for disabled riders as well as able-bodied. I am the Calnet 2012 State Champion for Beginning Trot Rider. I have been competing in it for many years and have worked my way up from being a walk-only rider with two or more aides to now being a beginning trot rider with no aides. I hope to advance to intermediate trot by next year. I also compete every month with able-bodied riders (and one other disabled rider) in a Gymkhana. I know I will never be the high points champion there, but it is fun to ride as an equal with my friends and family. I also enjoy camping and would love to take another cruise sometime.

TS: Do you think you will come out and check out the summer program?

LE: I would love to give it a try. I am not much of a water person, but the Jet-Skiing does sound fun from the way the ski coaches all talk about it. And I do like to go fast!

TS: What would you tell someone that is interested in getting involved with the USARC?

LE: I would tell them to do it without any regrets. I, as well as my parents, are always telling friends about it and telling them to give it a try. I tell them how much fun it is, and how easy it is. You don't have to be afraid if you don't know how to ski, because it is done for you. It is even easier than getting on a horse for the first time, and the landing is much softer if you fall! I have enjoyed all of my trips to USARC and look forward to doing it for years to come and progressing with my independence. I want to thank all of my coaches and volunteers for their help and encouragement and just having fun. They are what make the trips memorable.



Spyder may be on the “reins” but Laurie shows she’s not new to this particular rodeo.

Cassidy (cont.)

This past winter has been amazing thanks to USARC. Our grandson has been coming for 6 winters and this season, he skied alone!!! We have waited patiently for that day.

Thanks and praise goes to all of the teachers he has had in the past seasons. They give not only instruction, but so much encouragement, make learning fun for these kids, and don't give up. When you have a special needs child, it's easy to just give up. But they persevered until the day he did it on his own.

The staff is great to work with and helpful in every way. The two-hour drive each way has been worth it to see the look on his



If a picture is worth a thousand words, then a picture of Cassidy smiling after a day with the USARC is priceless.

face when he accomplished something new. Getting him off that mountain has been hard because he just loves to ski. It is the thing he prefers over any other sport he has been involved with. I really believe it is

due to the teachers and their encouragement and making learning fun for him. He has been so proud to show pictures of himself on skis to his classmates and teachers and it has just done wonders for his self esteem.

What these people do may seem like a "job" to them but they are making an impact on many lives as we watch the students come and go from the hut. We are so thankful that there is a USARC!!!



www.usarc.org

Don't forget to check out the new USARC website, masterfully crafted by USARC's own Sara Rosell and volunteer Claude Ciocan. While still undergoing refinement, it has all the information, forms, links and more that you could possibly ever want!

The USARC is grateful for our 2012 calendar year in-kind donors* whose support facilitates our success.

- Robert Allen
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- Bear Valley Bikes
- Ardis Beckner
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- Big Bear Mountain Resorts
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* If your support is not listed please accept our apologies and contact us so we can correct our records.



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If you have provided the USARC with your email, you receive *The Spirit* electronically, early and in color, and you will not receive a printed copy unless you request it. This saves important financial and environmental resources, so please do not print this unless necessary.

Attention Big Bear Real Estate Buyers & Sellers!

USARC staffer and real estate agent, Will Rahill, will donate 10% of his earned commission to USARC if a lead comes from a USARC associate. If you want to sell or purchase a home or property, please contact him at usarc@willrahill.com, 909.645.1949, or www.SearchBigBearRealEstate.com

Volunteer Kern River Raft Trip*

USARC Volunteer, Robert Allen, is hosting two Kern River rafting trip for USARC's summer and winter volunteers and their guests (May 31-June 2 and June 7-9.)

Fees are \$65 for volunteers, \$85 for guests, and \$25 for those 13 and under. Robert provides life jackets, helmets, rafts, paddles, and some wet-suits. Breakfast will be provided on Saturday and Sunday, as well as dinner on Saturday night. Spaces fill up quickly so interested volunteers should contact Robert promptly at allen6441@sbcglobal.net.



* This is **not** a USARC event, and the USARC does not in any way endorse, sanction or have any other association with the event. This is solely a courtesy notice to volunteers who may not have been aware of the opportunity.

Please like the USARC on Facebook!

Simply log on, then go to www.facebook.com/usarc1 (or you can type in our entire name: United States Adaptive Recreation Center) and, once there, click on the little "Like" (thumbs up) symbol.



Not only can you keep up to date on USARC happenings but you can help the USARC win important support and funding. Don't forget to ask all your Facebook friends to like USARC too. Thank you!

Memorial Day & 4th of July...

are awesome holidays to grocery shop for the USARC!

For Ralphs patrons, log onto www.ralphs.com and click on the "Community Contribution" link, then click "Enroll" or "Sign In", whichever is appropriate, and follow the prompts.



(USARC's NPO # is 80843).



For Vons and Safeway patrons, log onto www.escrip.com and under "Make a Difference in Four Easy Steps", and follow the prompts! (USARC's group ID # is 152931854).

Thank you, please tell a friend!

What's ahead at USARC?

MAY

14 Summer Reservations accepted at 9:00 AM

JUNE

22 Summer Volunteer Training (Big Bear)

JULY

10-11 Summer Day Sessions

17-18 Summer Day Sessions

24-25 Summer Day Sessions

31 Summer Day Session

AUGUST

1 Summer Day Session

6 Summer Volunteer Training (Long Beach)

7-9 Land Meets Sea Camp (Long Beach)

14-15 Summer Day Sessions

18-20 Summer Overnight Session 1

21-23 Summer Overnight Session 2

28-29 Summer Day Sessions

30 Summer Volunteer Party

OCTOBER

9-13 19th Annual Peak To Peak Pedal (P2P19)